

February 1956

REPORT

VI

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON INTERNAL SECURITY

IN

PROVIDING A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT FACILITY FOR
TESTING AND EVALUATING SECURITY EQUIPMENT

The ICIS has given consideration to the desirability of establishing a central government facility for testing and evaluating security equipment for government use. For these purposes, security equipment is defined as that physical equipment designed or used to protect classified information and material in any form against compromise by any means. It includes vaults, safes and safe-type cabinets, locks, alarms and alarm systems, detection devices, protective barriers, and any other appurtenances, devices, or systems, which may be designed to protect against, or disclose the presence, of, the effort by unauthorized persons to gain access to classified information or material, whether in written, oral, recorded, or manufactured form.

The ICIS studied the desirability and feasibility of establishing a body whose scope of operations would go beyond that of the Federal Committee on Security Equipment and would include a continuing research program similar to that formerly within the purview of the now defunct Physical Security Equipment Agency of the Department of Defense.

PROBLEM

To conduct a study relative to the desirability and feasibility of establishing a central government facility for testing and evaluating security equipment for government use.

DISCUSSION

It is understood that the formation of such an agency had been previously considered by the Federal Committee on Security Equipment. The National Bureau of Standards appeared to be the most eminently qualified activity as to personnel and technical resources to assimilate such functions as the proposed agency might undertake. Accordingly, Dr. A. T. McPherson of the National Bureau of Standards met with the Subcommittee on April 7, 1955, and advised as to the following points:

1. That the proposed program is within the statutory scope of the National Bureau of Standards in that the functions enumerated below fall within the category of services to other Federal agencies which the National Bureau of Standards is specifically authorized to provide;
2. That the National Bureau of Standards is currently conducting several analogous operations;

3. That in order to assure continuity of support for the program in the way of a stabilized personnel and space requirement, departments and agencies of government should indicate the character and volume of work likely to ensue from this program, so that the National Bureau of Standards might budget adequately for it;
4. That an Interdepartmental Policy Board on Security Equipment be established, composed of representatives of agencies having major security interest and concern, to develop Government-wide policy relating to the adequacy of security equipment.

Subsequently, Mr. A. V. Astin, Director, National Bureau of Standards, addressed a memorandum to the Commerce member of the ICIS Subcommittee on Protection of Classified Government Data, dated September 20, 1955, indicating his willingness to have the proposed facility established within the National Bureau of Standards.

CONCLUSION

That there is great merit in having available an agency which could perform testing, evaluation and research of security equipment which is of general interest to agencies in the Executive Branch of the government.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. That the Director, National Bureau of Standards, be authorized to establish a Security Equipment Facility within the National Bureau of Standards. This facility should be charged with duties and responsibilities to encompass the scope of the following functions, if such functions are not already within the purview of the current operations of the National Bureau of Standards:
 1. For the solution of physical and technical security problems, review pertinent basic and applied research and development projects bearing upon both foreign and domestic physical security equipment of all types, including but not limited to, files, chests, safes, and alarms. Evaluate and recommend the feasibility of modifying existing equipment, or adapting those equipments found by demonstration to provide adequate protective security countermeasures.
 2. Experimentally produce prototype physical and technical security equipment and devices:
 - a. Based on requirements furnished by the various agencies of the government to the facility through the Policy Board.
 - b. Based on needs anticipated by the facility, and approved by the Policy Board.

5. When required by the various agencies of government and approved by the Policy Board, with respect to specially developed equipment or supplies:
 - a. procure service test quantities of prototype equipment and supplies.
 - b. assist in the preparation of training and technical manuals.
 - c. assist in training of personnel in the use of such equipment.
4. Furnish to Federal agencies, when requested by them and approved by the Policy Board, advice, assistance, coordination and technical information on matters concerning operation and maintenance of the above items which may be adopted by one or more of the departments or agencies of government as items of standard issue.
5. Establish and maintain a working reference library pertinent to the mission.
6. Prepare an annual report on its activities for the ICIS and submit such interim progress reports as may be advisable.
- B. In order to insure the equitable and timely consideration of problems in this field and reasonably practicable solutions thereof, the ICIS recommends the establishment of a Policy Board for the guidance of the Security Equipment Facility. The Board should be comprised of representatives from AEC, CIA, Defense, Justice, State and Treasury, and a representative of the National Bureau of Standards with an advisory function to the Board. GSA will participate in matters relating to standardization, specifications, and procurement. The Board should be chaired by an elected member of the group, and should be charged with the following responsibilities:
 1. Developing and recommending minimum specifications criteria for the acceptability of manufactured security equipment.
 2. Coordinating with respect to this program the requirements of all departments and agencies of government in this field relating to:
 - a. screening and approving of requests for evaluation of equipment or development of a new equipment.
 - b. setting of priorities on the initiation of research, evaluation, and testing.
 3. Insuring that the beneficial results of the evaluation or development effort of the facility are made available to any agency of government. In this regard the Policy Board shall limit the dissemination of information relating to specialized security equipment developed to agencies represented on the board and to other agencies demonstrating a need therefor.

When necessary, providing the facility with selected information pertaining to hostile developments and applications of security and intelligence collecting equipment, so as to guide the facility in developing and devising adequate security equipment to detect and counteract such threats.

5. Formulation of such other Government-wide policy on all matters involving the evaluation and testing of security equipment as may be in consonance with the functions of the facility as set forth above.
- C. The ICIS recommends that rather than performing these services on a reimbursable basis, the facility establish its own budgetary basis as soon as possible to avoid subjecting the Bureau of Standards to the vicissitudes of individual departmental budgetary restrictions.
- D. That the Policy Board absorb the functions of the Federal Committee on Security Equipment and serve temporarily as an agency of the Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security until such time as that Committee decrees its independence.
- E. That the Policy Board be directed to advise the National Bureau of Standards as soon as possible of the anticipated character and volume of work likely to ensue from this program, to permit the National Bureau of Standards to take adequate budgetary action.